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LEFT WING NEEDLE TRADES CRISIS

WEEK

Sandino

A few short weeks ago the Daily Worker gave General Sandino, Nicaraguan nationalist, a clean bill of health on the charges made that he had been bought off by American imperialism. It printed the statement of the "League against Imperialism" which said that "the slanderous allegations were spread by agents of Yankee imperialism to discredit a man in the eyes of the working class and peasant masses of Latin America" and so on and so forth. Having been given the O. K. by this Kuo Min Tangesque organization of the Comintern, Sandino promptly proceeded to fire his Communist secretary, Marti, and expel from his army any and all "foreigners". Immediately the Daily Worker discovered (May 19, 1930) that "the denunciation by Sandino of Communists, in the form of his discharge of Marti, appears as a prologue to the equanimity with which his entrance into Nicaragua is observed by the U.S. marines." Yesterday's thoroughly white-washed "noble warrior against imperialism" is thus transformed over night into a tacit agent of imperialism's marines. The capacity of Stalinism for "united front" adventures with bourgeois nationalists seem to be without bottom.

A. C. W. in Toronto

It was not difficult to predict the thorough valuelessness of the Toronto convention of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. It has never held a more empty meeting. Hillman's big achievement was Philadelphia, where he sold speed-up unionism to the bosses like a farmer sells sheep. Cleveland is to be tackled next—by the same methods. The great statesman of the A. C. W. offers workers to the bosses on this basis: "Let me handle them and you'll be surprised at the economies I can make possible." Needless to say, the Left wing is not present at Toronto: its sectarian policy excludes such a possibility. For that, however, Hillman has made his peace again with Beckerman—behind the scenes. All is now harmony in the A. C. W., with the clothing workers paying heavily for it.

U. S. of Briand

M. Briand has now "concretized" his plan for a United Staes of Europe and given the liberals another chance to become hysterical with joy. Needless to say that the new plan will go the way of the previous ones—the ash-heap. The British lion looks upon it with a jaundiced eye, and with reason, for it has no intention of letting France establish its formal domination of the continent. Mussolini has already screamed a belligerent reply to it, for this two-by-four imperialist has no intention of letting Briand stick his leg into the Italian boot. And not even a child can be deceived by the polite assurance that the new plan is "not directed against the United States" or the Soviets, or by any illusions about America's acquiescence in this utopian anti--dollar bloc. Naturally Briand will not succeed in establishing this reactionary bloc which immediately run its head into a dozen walls. Only the proletarian revolution in Europe can unite the continent on a socialist basis and throw off the domination of the golden heel from across the sea. The Daily Worker and Co., as usual, see only an

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The Left wing movement in the needle trades is experiencing a severe crisis. With the exception of a handful of blind bureaucrats for whom nothing has changed, the crisis has been realized by everyone. The most superficial glance at the situation reveals the bald facts that while the Left wing, two or three years ago, was followed by the decisive majority of the needle trades workers and was driving back the Right wing office holders on every front, it has today accumulated an unbroken series of defeats, been reduced to the Communist fraction and its most direct sympathizers, and the Right wing has succeeded in re-establishing a large measure of its control. The picture includes not only New York, but practically every other needle trades center in the country where the Left wing contended with the Right for the support of the workers.

Neither the causes nor the remedies for the situation have yet been given by the official Left wing leadership: on the contrary, an honest and thorough analysis is prohibited by it (that is, by the present leadership of the Communist Party) because it would be the one to suffer primarily from such an investigation. It even seeks to forestall this urgently needed examination by a barrage of criticism directed against its factional opponents in the union and against the lower functionaries who merely executed orders.

False "Self-Criticism"

That kind of "self-criticism" is best exemplied by the notorious article of Johnstone's which we dealt with in our last number. For the Johnstones it is sufficient to unload their responsibility upon someone else; as for what is to be done in the future so that the blundering past shall not be repeated, they let the blueprints of the "third period" take care of that. But since these blueprints do not improve the situation (on the contrary, they worsen it), it falls to the rank and file workers in the Left wing to review its position and decide upon a proper course of action.

The Left wing is today reduced to a shadow of its former strength. One need only look at the recent "Summary of Minutes of Executive Council Meetings" issued by the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union to see this truth substantiated. There is not a single gain recorded there; not one step forward is referred to; but in every field there are numerous losses and failures mentioned. And the admissions of the Executive Council are far more to the point than all the gaseous bluff of the Daily Worker and Freiheit.

Out of the thousands that once adhered to the Left wing, the union today has a scant 3,000 dues paying members left in New York (more than one fourth of whom are Party members!) with a worse record in other cities. Out of the irrepressible enthusiasm and spirit of self-sacrifice that imbued the Left wing and won its victories, there is left only passivity and skepticism. Out of the prestige and authority its leadership once enjoyed, there remains only the distrust and suspicion of the workers.

What has happened? There can be no adequate understanding of the causes for the situation unless it is clearly seen that the crisis in the Left wing of the needle trades is part and parcel of the crisis in the whole Communist movement, a crisis engendered by the multiplication of zig-zags known as Stalinism. The apparent inability of the leadership to maintain a stable policy is a reflection of the constant leaps every national Party leadership is compelled to make in order to keep pace with the ruling machine in the Comintern and the Russian Party. Only with this clearly established can we explain how the Left wing leadership passes so abruptly from an openly opportunist line of action to a rigidly sectarian one, from ultra-conservatism to the wildest adventurism, from united front with Sigman to a rejection of the united front with rank and file

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Stalinist Brutalities in Russia

(The editoral board of the "Bulletin of the Russian Opposition (Bolshevik-Leninist[8]) has sent us the important communications below.)

Dear Comrade:

From a very reliable source we have received the following information: "In the Upper-Urals Solitary Prison, which, as is known, is filled mainly by our Opposition comrades (there are 160 of them), two new mass beatings have taken place. One on February 5 and the other on February 23. On the 23rd, besides the beatings, our comrades were drenched with water from a fire hose—this in the very severest period of February frost. The pretext for the beatings was the protest against the terrible conditions of imprisonment."

These brutal deeds of the Stalinist regime must be denounced in every working class organization and meeting. The heroic fight of our Russian comrades calls for the warmest solidarity from the class conscious militants in the United States.

* * *

A Raid on Rakovsky

We are informed:

"In the middle of February there was a raid at Rakovsky's which lasted for seven hours. Everything was taken away. Among other things it seems that they also took the completed draft of a declaration to the Party. The police agents in charge of the raid declared to Rakovsky: 'You're holding on to our coat-tails.' These ought to go down in history. It is regrettable that **right now** we are holding on **only** to the coat tails. But times will change!"

The author of this letter is right. The words of the G. P. U. agent ought to go down in history Doubtlessly, they are not his own words. They came down to him through a series of stages from the very top. These are the words of the "secretarial genius" (a play on the Russian words for "general secretary", i. e., Stalin.—Ed.) At all the stages, zig-zags and turns of recent years, the victorious, mighty general faction of Stalin did not take a single free step: the "defeated Opposition"—the Left Opposition always pulls at its coat tails. It pulled it from the embrace of Chiang Kai-Shek, Purcell, and the "powerful" middle peasant. It pulled it from the bloc with Brandler, Roy, Lovestone, Bucharin. Stalin finally decided to turn to the Left so abruptly, so boldly, so definitely, as to break loose from the Opposition forever. But in vain. The Opposition once more seized his "coat-tails" and this time pulled him "backward" from the edge of the precipice. It is unbearable. It must not be tolerated any longer. Then what is to be done? What do you mean, **what:** Raid Rakovsky, take away his papers, arrest his correspondents. Since they have no thoughts of their own, they have to interfere with the thinking of others.

On Guard!

In one of the villages of the Bysk district there was an uprising, under the leadership of...a representative of the G.P.U.! **This** is where the real **enemies** of the Soviet government are. Thousands upon thousands of brutes who beat up our friends in the solitary prisons, who torture them, are in no way different from the above mentioned "representative" of the G. P. U. The Thermidorian scoundrels **in the meantime** unleash their fury against Communism at the Oppositionists. The insurgents assassinated dozens of their "Party comrades" and then fled to the mountains. This is how matters stand.

WHAT DOES THE OPPOSITION STAND FOR?

The American Left Wing Weakened by Stalinism
Thousands of Oppositionists Imprisoned in Russia
Leon Trotsky Exiled on an Island in Turkey

WHY?

Hear the Program of the Left Opposition Presented by

MAURICE	ARNE	VINCENT	KARL
SPECTOR	**SWABECK**	**DUNNE**	**SKOGLUND**
Canada	Chicago	St. Paul	Minneapolis

NOW IN NEW YORK FOR THE MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF AMERICA (OPPOSITION)

At STUYVESANT CASINO, 2nd Ave. and 9th St.

On Tuesday, May 27, 1930 - - at 8 p. m. Sharp

Admission 25c **ALL INVITED**

Auspices: New York Branch, Communist League of America (Opposition)

In the Party

The Convention Nears

Our Communist Party convention is scheduled to open June 20 in New York. By now, the pre-convention discussion should have been in full swing in the press as well as in the Party units. The whole Party, every member should have been astir with the issues and problems confronting us. And the problems are many indeed. That they deserve discussion, or require elucidation, nobody will deny. In a very short period we "succeeded" to expel from the Party two oppositions, we left behind the "second period", and triumphantly entered the "third and final period", the "period of wars and revolution". Now is the time to make some summaries, to draw some conclusions. After all it was a big jump to take and a very abrupt one. It was virtually overnight that the historic periods were declared changed. Now is the time to count our losses and gains. How many broke their necks in the process? How many were left behind and are still lingering around in the daze of the "second period"? Or can we put the questions differently: How did our policies for this "period of wars and revolution" fare? This is the time to take stock. But there is nothing of the kind.

In one short year we created a widespread net of industrial revolutionary unions, that should make anybody green with envy. As a district representative expressed it at my fraction meeting: "Anyone not joining the T. U. U. L. will be expelled from the Party...Our unions now exist in every field of industry and there can be no excuse on that score". Hasn't any numbed an..vbgkqj cmfwyp cmfwyp story to tell in connection with this great task that was accomplished? Isn't this something to boast about? Or is modesty a requirement of the third period?

Passivity and Indifference

So far nobody has contributed anything to the pre-convention discussion. This in itself is a very alarming sign. The whole Party membership is permeated with a feeling of apathy and passivity. And no wonder. To write the convention theses, Bedacht was sent to Moscow. There was nobody literate enough left in the Party to draw up the theses. The consequence is that no one can open his mouth in criticism of them. To criticise the theses is to criticize the Comintern—but that is the greatest of heresies for which the axe of expulsion descends. The same applies to the policy of abandoning the old unions and the creation of a number of "Industrial' unions on paper—unions with long names, wide jurisdiction, very revolutionary programs, but with only one thing missing—members. If anyone objects to this policy there is no way to express it unless he is ready to be kicked out of the Party. For isn't it a decision of the Fourth World Congress and Sixth Plenum of the R.I.L.U.? To talk against that is heresy once more. Facts no longer matter, the crying realities of a situation are meaningless, that magic word "third period" is the all-powerful, most convincing explanation. When somebody dares to suggest timidly that it was exactly this kind of tactics that Lenin ridiculed so convincingly in his pamphlet on the trade unions or his book on infantile sickness, the answer is that Lenin did not write it in the third period.

What is left for the members to discuss? How much remains within the limits of "legal expression"? Evidently not a single issue, where the matter of principles or tactics is involved. The result is very lamentable. Policies are handed down from the top. nobody dares to express his disagreement openly, but the indifference nevertheless accumulate and express themselves in the passivity and apathy on the part of Party members.

Meetings Unattended

This is evidenced in every sphere of party life. The most important meetings are not attended, work assigned is not carried out, and whatever is done is achieved by the threat of expulsion. And the members do not want to be expelled. They are staying inside the Party and waiting for "better days" to come. All the letters sent out to the Party members calling for the most insignificant meeting, carry with them the warning that if the comrade does not attend he will be called before the control commission. And, by the way, this is now the busiest institution in the Party. The control commission, created originally for the curbing of bureaucratic abuses by the apparatus, has long forgotten its original aim, and become a whip against "heresy" and for spurring up activity by threats.

To cite some examples of this passivity: At the last general fraction meeting of the needle trades at which the future of the union was discussed there was no more than one eighth of the members present. This is the statement made by the chairman, Benjamin. Out of 550 Party members listed in the building trades, there were no more than 55 members present at the last general fraction meetings. I cite these examples because that is where the bulk of the New York membership is. This is the eloquent manner in which the members participate in the Party discussion and Party life in general. —B.T.

THE WEEK

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anti-Soviet bloc and nothing else. These political bankrupts are reducing the Communist movement, as comrade Trotsky puts it, to the role of a frontier guard.

A Tearful Appeal

The Berlin session of the executive committee of the Second International has just issued an appeal to the Russian workers. Its warmth should melt a stone. Messrs. Bauer, Hillquit, Mueller, Vandervelde, Longuet and MacDonald are perturbed by the Russian situation and appeal to the Soviet proletariat to preserve their revolutionary honor and achievements... by giving democracy a chance. The appeal should have been concrete and proposed Herr Comrade Zoergiebel for Moscow Chief of Police, the Honorable Comrade Thomas for Minister of Labor, and the Most Honorable Ramsay MacDonald as Premier. Then the Russian workers would know what democracy looks like. It should be emphasized that the Second International is concerned with the welfare of the poor Russian slave of the Bolshevik autocracy—so concerned, in fact that it "forgot" to appeal to the British and Indian workers to overthrow the government of comrade MacDonald which is shooting them full of social democratic lead. Just an oversight, we presume.

In the Factories

A Letter From Moscow

We are informed from Moscow:

At the factory committee elections of the metal workers, the following demands were put forth: genuine and not bureaucratic elections, genuine self-criticism. Various crafts brought up demands for wage increases, improvement of the food, and an increase in the allotment. These demands arise spontaneously and nobody leads the movement. Alongside of this, there is evident an increase in counter-revolutionary moods. In connection with the 'one-man command" there is sharp dissatisfaction. It often rises to the surface. At the "Red Rubber Plant the worker came out at the conference in the name of a whole group, with a demand to limit the rights of the managers and foremen. As is customary, this group was raked over the coals and denounced as lazy, trouble-makers, etc., and they were expelled, some from the Party, some from the unions and some from both. In the Butyrki prison, there are about 200 of our comrades (Oppositionists). —L.

Our National Tour

New York Begins with a Successful Meeting

Despite the threatening weather and brief rain, close to three hundred New York workers filled the Labor Temple on May 15 to hear comrade Max Shachtman report on the revolutionary movement in Europe, the International Conference of the Left Opposition in Paris, and his visit to comrade L.D. Trotsky in Turkey. The meeting was the first since Shachtman's return from Europe, and it led off the national tour which has been arranged by the the Communist League branches throughout the country.

Speaks on Five Year Plan

The speaker gave a detailed picture of the present critical situation in the Soviet Union and the viewpoint of comrade Trotsky, as well as an account of the big step frward taken by the Left Opposition at its International Conference in Paris. His analysis of the status and prospects of the Five Year Plan was attentively followed by the whole audience, which included numerous Party members and Lovestoneites.

Questions were asked and answered and an interesting discussion took place. One Party member who made the usual "exposure of Trotskyism" was effectively answered from the platform.

During his remarks, the chairman, comrade Cannon, isuued a challenge to the Lovestone faction, which has suddenly become the champion of open discussion to a public debate of the principle questions in dispute in the Communist movement. Considerable literature was sold and a collection of over $30.00 taken.

Mass meetings on the same subject are being arranged in other cities, and the schedule of the tour is printed below. Halls and adresses will be filled in as soon as local arrangements are made:

New Haven, Friday, May 30.

Philadelphia, Saturday, May 31, Hancock Hall, 814 Girard Ave.

Boston, Sunday, June 1, C. L. branch meeting. Monday, June 2, mass meeting at 62 Chambers Street.

Montreal, Tuesday, June 3.

Toronto, Wednesday-Thursday, June 4-5.

Hamilton, Friday, June 6.

Detroit, Saturday-Sunday, June 7-8.

Chicago, Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday, June 9-10-11-12.

Minneapolis, St. Paul, Superior, Friday-Saturday-Sunday-Monday-Tuesday, June 13-14-15-16, 17.

Kansas City, Thursday-Friday-Saturday June 19-20-21.

St. Louis, Sunday-Monday, June 22-23.

Springfield, Tuesday, June 24.

Cleveland, Wednesday-Thursday, June 25-26.

Pittsburgh, Friday-Saturday, June 27-28.

All information on the tour can be secured from 25 Third Avenue, New York.

After the May Day Meeting in Boston

BOSTON—

The First of May demonstration of the Communist party in Boston was quite well attended but proved that the big crowd of 25,000 on March 6 was a curiosity, excitement-seeking crowd gathered as a result of the shouting of the capitalist press that a big fight was expected on the Common between the police and the Communists. While the police still kept up their idiotic preparation for an uprising (claiming that they were guarding all important places like the telephone exchange, railroad stations, etc.) the papers did not feature the First of May on the front page .Thus only the regular crowd of 3,000 to 5,000 people, which the Communists usually can gather, came—this time in somewhat larger numbers because of the present unemployment.

Harry Cantor, just released from Deer Island was the main speaker. His eight months martyrdom was not played up at all. While one speaker dramatically pointed out the sufferings of a person at Deer Island even during the fifteen minute period, he did not think it necessary to say that the chairman suffered there for the last eight months. Obviously, since the Stephens affair, the Party does not want to push Harry Cantor too much. They probably do not know whether they really can trust Cantor. It seems no one trusts another any more in the Party.

The smaller number of people at this demonstration perhaps helped to cure the Party members of their grandiose illusions which the March 6 demonstration developed to such a dangerous degree. Then they "saw" 50,000 people where average people could see only 15 and 20,000. They claimed 25,000 marching on the streets of Boston where my eyes could see only 200. They reported to the Daily Worker the next day (see March 7 issues) that a fight was going on on the Common "but the workers are still holding the Common"—which is a huge joke to every Bostonian.

This time, they claimed 15,000 around the bandstand. This is not so grossly exaggerated; a comrade well used to large crowds estimated it as 5,000 and those marching from the bandstand to the Charles Street Mall as 2,000 to 3,000 while the Daily Worker claimed 5,000. The differences between imaginary numbers and real ones are not as striking as on March 6. So the comrades of the Party are learning.

A meeting of the executive committee of Boston and nearby branches of the Independent Workmen's Circle was called last Tuesday to evaluate the results of the fight with the Stalinists who had left the organization to start their own Sick Benefit organization. Their boast was that they would take half of the members with them. Up to the present time about 1200 or 1400 have left the I. W. C.—that is, about one seventh of the membership—and some of these have returned already.

As one of the speakers I pointed out that we should not have been fooled by the slogan taken by the Stalinists, that this is a fight of the Lefts against the Rights. Many comrades were misled by it. It was really a fight of the Communist party officials against a Left wing organization, a foolish, childish fight for they only alienated people who had always supported them. In trying to get mechanical control over a Left wing organization, they made instead an enemy of it. We are the same Left wingers; we believe in revolutionary class struggle; we are for the dictatorship of the proletariat; we all are supporting Soviet Russia; we are against the Party only on the ground of its tactics. Otherwise we will keep up our Left wing work. Hearty applause from the majority of the executives present proved that I expressed their views.

There was a time when Branch 18, I. W. C., was entirely under mechanical Party rule . Trotskyists like myself could not speak there. Now, after losing nine or ten members, Branch 18 invited me as speaker for the May Day celebration. This is significant in proving how the Communist Party has lost valuable ground.

Comrade Schlossburg was invited to speak on May 1 for Branch 27, I. W. C.

—A.K.

"MY LIFE"

All readers of the Militant and their friends, who desire to get their copy of of Leon Trotsky, "My Life", should make it a point to order the bokk directly through the Militant. Shipment will be made the day the order is received, and the cost of the book, five dollars, ($5.00), covers the postage charge. Send your order, together with money order or cash to

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The Crisis in the Needle Trades Left Wing Movement

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workers. It dances and leaps to the tunes changed each year by the Stalinist group in the movement to suit its narrow factional interests.

A Zig-Zagging Leadership

The needle trades Left wing leadership has been most prominent in executing these zig-zags. At one moment, it seeks united fronts with Sigman or Ninfo; the next moment, it vents its spite upon Sigman by denouncing the workers whom he still deludes (or who follow him for any other reason) as "social fascists" with whom it will have nothing at all to do. At one moment, it lets golden opportunities go by without forming its own Left wing union, for fear of making the Right wing bureaucrats angry; the next moment, it seeks to make up for lost time and blunders by artificially forcing events and creating "unions" where there is no basis at all for them.

All of these changes, which occur with increasing frequency, are decided bureaucratically, behind the scenes, upon arbitrary command from above, without relation to the realities of the struggle. It is precisely because of the purely administrative nature of these changes and the fact that they do not correspond to the needs of the struggle, that each change leaves the workers more bewildered. The workers are not chessman that can be moved about unresistingly by "master" strategists". The result of these zig-zags, therefore, is that the workers are alienated from the movement, becoming a prey to the Right wing demagogues or falling into indifference and passivity. That is what has happened particularly in the needle trades Left wing movement.

Another factor of enormous importance is the cancer of corruption (we do not refer here, necessarily, to financial corruption) and bureaucratism. For shallow-minded observers and similar Johnstones, these are accidental and personal phenomena which can be wiped out by simply denouncing them. Unfortunately, the matter is not so simple. They are the natural twin products of that very regime which the Johnstones personify and defend. Why? Because to carry out a zig-zag policy which the workers would not accept of their own accord, it is necessary to have bureaucrats who will execute orders from above even against the interests and wishes of the ranks. Not the "deviations" from Stalinist policy produce bureaucracy, but the policy itself. And bureaucracy goes hand in hand with corruption and degeneration. Bureaucracy is a synonym for mutual factional protection.

Could there be a crasser expression of this than Johnstone's article, in which (by silence) he condones in the Party leaders of the Left wing union the same deeds for which he condemns Lovestoneite leaders? The knowledge that "loyalty to the line" means a grant of automatic immunity from above, is the greatest incentive to corruption. That is the theory and practice of Stalinism, and the Left wing, which gained its strength in the fight against the bureaucrcy of the Right wing must immediately purge itself of the same malady before it is rendered impotent.

There is no absolute preventive for bureaucratism; but there are some excellent guarantees against it. Workers democracy is one of them. But it does not exist in the Needle Trades Industrial Union any more than it does in the other unions controlled by the Stalinists, because its existence is incompatible with their domination.

The absence of workers democracy is notorious in the N. T. W. I. U. The rank and file worker does not feel at home in the union meetings. An atmosphere of terror has been created so that when a workers rises to make the slightest criticism he is forthwith deluged with cries of "Trotskyite, Lovestoneite, Sigmanite, scab, renegade ,disrupter," and the dozens of others in the choice collection of the modern Left wing bureaucrats.

The Party bureaucrats in the unions devote their greatest attention to keeping every post—no matter how important—tightly in their own hands. The worker, sympathetic to Communism though he may be, is made to feel that he can have no say in the work or the directing of the work unless he is a Party member—and sometimes unless he is a member of a particular Party faction! The methods and system of Party organization, already narrowed down out of all legitimate proportions, are automatically transferred into the union, which the Party rules like an imperialist dependency.

Re-Establish Workers Democracy

The re-establishment of workers democracy in the Left wing is an imperative preliminary to any forward step. The Left wing union must be returned to the control of the membership. The Communists and their Party must become the guide, the advisor of the union and cease to be a taskmaster armed with a pistol and a lash. A continuation of the present high-handed, autocratic, brutal Party methods in the trade unions must lead inevitably to a repetition of the situation in the French C.G.T.U. (red trade unions) where a rebellion has set in not only against the Party, but (so far as some elements are concerned, at least) against Communism as such. The French situation, in which the pure "syndicalists" are profiting by the crude blunders of official Communism should be a warning to the comrades here.

Workers democracy in the needle trades Left wing is no abstract question that can be postponed for some other time; it is an urgent, unpostponable issue involving the life and death of the organization. But its achievement—let this not be lost sight f for a moment—is conditioned upon a relentless strugggle against that very bureaucracy which came into existence by abolishing workers democracy. There can be no half-measures in this necessary strugggle.

To make a machine function properly—and a trade union is one of the workers machines in the class struggle—one must know how and where to direct it. It is necessary to make all the parts of this machine work smoothly and in proper relation to each other—the party and the union, the leadership and the masses. The problem in the needle trades Left wing—after the attainment of this proper coordination we spoke of above (fight against bureaucracy, corruption, for workers democracy, etc., etc.)—is to know how and where to direct this machine, that is, what policies the Left wing must pursue in order to win the workers to its side.

The essence of the problem to be solved by the Left wing in this respect is, first, to win back the workers over whom the Right wing has established its control, and secondly, to organize those workers who are outside of both the Right and Left wing unions.

Organize the Unorganized

One of the most powerful slogans, one with which the Left wing grew strong in the eyes of the workers, was the organization of the unorganized. In New York (which is typical), the MAJORITY of the needle trades workers (with the possible exceptions of the men's clothing workers) are UNORGANIZED. They are among the most exploited in the industry; they work under conditions most closely approximating the old sweat shops. It is primarily the task of the Left wing to organize these workers.

The fact of the existence of these tens of thousands of unorganized workers who do not follow the Right wing and will not be organized by it, is already sufficient answer to any tendencies in the Left wing (and there are such tendencies) to liquidate the Left wing union and filter back into the Schlesinger union to function there solely as a minority group. These tendencies to easy surrender, which are nourished by the paralysis of the present leadership and the feeling of hopelessness it creates, cannot be successfully combatted by administrative decree, or theses. They must be revealed as wrong by demonstrating IN WORK AND STRUGGLE that there remains a broad foundation for the existence and development of the Left wing union.

The difficulty of organizing these workers—depressed by previous defeats—need not be underestimated. That is true. But it is also true that they form an enormous reservoir of strength for the Left wing. They will not be organized over night, or by sensational, short-lived "campaigns". But persistent, steady activity will do it, provided that these workers are approached on the basis of a concrete strugggle against their sweat-shop conditions and not on the basis of abstract slogans translated literally from the latest Molotov thesis.

They can be organized if the approach to them is based, not on the sectarian policies now dominating the Left wing, not on the virtual demand that every worker recognize the leadership of the Communist Party, but on the united front of the organized revolutionary workers with the progressive and even backward workers who want a union that really fights the bosses.

Organize the Right Wing Workers

The policy of organizing (not talking about it on paper, but really organizing) the unorganized workers for struggle (not putches, not two day strikes for the record, but real struggle) inseparable from the job of mobilizing the workers in the Right wing union for the same purpose—a job that can be accomplished only in battle against Schlesinger and Co. and their class collaboration.

There are thousands of militant workers today registered with the Right wing who were with the Left wing yesterday. They are working in many instances under virtual check-off conditions, i. e., no dues to Schlesinger? no job in the shop! The Right wing established control over them by its connivance with the employers and with the aid of the Left wing's blockheaded blunders.

It goes without saying that the Right wing has not improved their conditions, that there is great dissatisfaction among these workers, that it is possible to organize them for a fight against the joint forces of the bosses and their labor agents. In the majority of cases these workers have not ceased to be militants and Left wingers; many of them were simply compelled to register with the Right. The policy of the Left wing union makes it impossible to win them back. Its slogan is simply: Stop paying dues to Schlesinger and join the N. T. W. I. U. Naturally, this slogan has not yet registered a single success.

Out of some stupd fetich, the official Left wing has till now refused to organize the militant elements in the Right wing union for a struggle. This policy—or rather lack of policy—must be dumped over board. It is good for nothing at all. The Left wing must immediately proceed to organize its minorities in the Right wing union, and on the basis of the daily needs of the workers which the Schlesingers so cynically disregard, mobilize a force for the disruption of the boss-controlled union and the recruitment of the workers now in it for the Left wing. An intelligent program, fitted to the needle trades workers needs, can succeed in mobilizing them for a fight—and a fight against the bosses means a fight against Schlesinger.

The workers want unity. They want to fight when there is a possibility of success. They can see none in the narrow, academic policy of the Left wing. The plank to bridge the gap between the small organized Left wing union and the thousands in the Right wing union is the united front. More than six months ago, before Johnstone was awakened by Lozovsky's proddings and the need to find a scapegoat, we wrote in the Militant (November 1, 1929) in connection with the Right wing cloak strike:

"The Left wing can make headway, and regain the strength and influence it enjoyed in 1926 and 1927, if it knows how to approach the Right wing worker, how to work for a united front. It must challenge Schlesinger and Co. openly to unite the divided ranks of the workers. It must work for joint action, joint comittees in the shops. The Schlesingers and Dubinskys will expose themselves sufficiently in their actions during the strugggle, but only if the Left wing shows its readiness to work side by side with the Right wing worker."

This proposal was rejected at that time by the Left wing; it paid for that by further losses. Long after the fact, Johnstone attempts a similar criticism, but he proposes nothing for the future. Our proposal then holds good in essence today and for the next period.

The United Front

The official Left wing theory of the Right wing workers as "social fascists" automatically excludes the idea of a united front on a minimum platform of struggle. The theory is false; it is also good for nothing at all—except to demonstrate the theoretical poverty of Stalinism—and must be rejected. The tactic of the united front is not a cement to unite the leaders of the Left wing and the Right the Purcells and the Tomskys—that is the perversion of the united front; the united front can be a knife cutting the masses still following the Right wing loose from their misleaders. Properly utilized, this knife can become a powerful weapon in the hands of the Left wing. Lightly thrown aside, as the official Left wing has done it leaves the Right wing bureaucrats just that much greater predominance of weapons.

The superficial argument that the I. L. G. W. is a "company union" is not worth a penny. That is the attitude of Mr. William Green towards out-and-out company unions: "We will have nothing to do with them!" That is, we will not fight the bosses for the workers they dominate. The Left wing, by its argument, says: "We will not fight Schlesinger for the workers he dominates. Let them come to us or be damned eternally in hell as social fascists."

* * *

The philosophical idealist believes the world of reality to be a mere reflection of man's ideas. The third period chiefs of the needle trades Left wing (and, for that matter, the whole Party-controlled Left wing) seem to believe that the world of reality can be made to act in conformity with their abstract, pre-conceived blueprints, drawn up without any relation to life and struggle and facts. The Left wing must learn to look at facts, disconcerting and inconvenient as they may be, and to "proceed from that which is".

No program, irrespective of its excellence, can settle the difficulties over night; the Left wing cannot so easily pay off the debts it has accumulated through a series of past blunders and defeats. Still, the serious crisis in the N. T. W. I. U., which threatens the whole future of the Left wing movement, demands a profound and free discussion—not the contemptible, bureaucratic "revelations" of the Johnstones. The Johnstones, Golds and the rest, cannot lead such a discussion, for it means their own downfall. Therefore they prohibit it. Therefore, it must be held in spite of them. And that not only in the needle trades, but in every other industrial union controlled—and undermined—by the Stalinists. That is the need of the moment. That is the job of the rank and file of the Left wing. The future of the movement is at stake.

—M. S.

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The Militant invites Left wing needle trades workers to write for its columns on the situation in the union and to give their views on the problems of their movement. Articles written in any language will be translated into English and printed. The Daily Worker is the closed organ of the cynical bureaucrats—the Militant aims to become the voice of the militant rank and file.

Φ

NEW YORK—The growing drive against Communist propaganda reached a climax in February and March when nearly 800 were ahrested in unprecedented police attacks, reports the American Civil Liberties Union.

An Open Letter to the Members of the C. P. S. U. (b)

By L. D. TROTSKY

Dear Comrades:

The present letter is promoted by a feeling of the greatest anxiety over the future of the Soviet Union and the destinies of the proletarian dictatorship. The policy of the present leadership, that is, of the narrow group of Stalin, is leading the country at full speed towards the most dangerous crisis and the worst catastrophes.

Everything that served for years to combat the Opposition, under the pretext that it would not admit it—the question of the "smytchka," a correct policy towards the peasant,—has suddenly been forgotten, or rather transformed into its opposite. The most elementary principles of Marxism are trampled under foot. This has been particularly marked in the question of collectivization. Under the direct effect of the purely administrative measures in 1928 and 1929, in the struggle for bread, the collectivization has attained proportions that nobody had ever forseen and which find no justification in the real state of the means of production. From that flows without fail the perspective of the collapse of most of the kolkhoz, the institution of profound internal dissensions and the endangering for a long time of the productive forces of rural economy which are already so diminished for the moment.

Kulak and Kholkhoz

But even the minority of kolkhoz that have vitality, while constituting incontestable progress, is not yet equivalent to "socialism." With their present means of production and the conditions of market economy that accompany them, the kolkhoz will unfailingly cause to emerge from their ranks a new layer of peasant-exploiters. The destruction of the Kulak class outside of the kolkhoz is not only powerless to revive the economic progress of the peasant class but it is not even able to prevent the birth of the Kulak inside the kolkhoz. This truth will be demonstrated primarily in the artels that achieve the best economic successes. By proclaiming that the kolkhoz are socialist enterprises, the present leadership furnishes by that very fact an excellent camouflage for the Kulaks within the kolkhoz. It goes without saying that it doesn't do this deliberately but the misfortune is that its whole policy has always been that way: it thinks of nothing, foresees nothing dragging behind the tail of events and flinging itself from one exteme into the other.

To back up technically, no matter how little, the "generalized" collectivization, one is now forced to augment sharply the production program for agricultural implements. But this production depends in turn upon a series of other industrial branches. The plan of production, without this, had already reached a very high degree of tension. Even admitting that the new production program for agricultural implements could be realized—which is far from certain—the present tempo of collectivization will still exceed considerably the material possibilities.

One must never lose sight of the fact that the collectivization was not born out of a broad test that should have been made of the superiorities of collective economy over individual economy, but exclusively of administrative measures in the struggle for bread. These measures, in turn, were necessitated by the defective economic policy towards the poor peasant and towards the Kulak. It is true that the fundamental difficulties of socialist construction are outside the power of the leadership. They lie in the impossibility of establishing the socalist society in a single country, which is, moreover, a particularly backward country. But that is precisely why one must demand of the leadership a clear understanding of all the factors of evolution, and to know how to determine in time what lies within the realm of the possible and of the impossible. Within these limits, the realization of certain successes on the road of socialist construction is a perfectly possible thing, particularly the maintenance of the dictatorship of the proletariat up to the time of the revolutionary victory in the advanced countries. Unfortunately the Centrist leadership shows a fatal incapacity not only in evaluating exactly the internal resources of the dictatorship but to grasp their interdependence upon the active forces of the world conjuncture.

The first five year plan elaborated in 1925 forsaw a growth of industry from 9 to 10 percent per year. Under the pressure of the criticisms of the Opposition based on the living experience of facts ,the five year plan was completely revised and the co-efficient of growth raised to 20 percent. But from that moment on, the leadership, taking alarm at its own spirit of indecision, no longer know any restraint. Behind the prescribed tempos were verified by experience, before the first successes were guaranteed, before the conditions of the workers were improved, the Stalinist leadership launched the new slogan: "The five year plan in four years!"

At the same time, the production program for agricultural implements adopted a still more accelerated tempo. As for the collectivization of the small peasant holdings which constituted, by themselves, the most dangerous and slowest task—it left far behind it all the other economic problems. As has frequently happened in history, **"chvostism"** (being at the tail of events) gave way directly to its opposite—**adventurism.** But never before had this metamorphosis attained such a scale. And above all, never before had the historical stake been so important, namely: the very fate of the October revolution.

The Threatening Crisis

Economics cannot be violated. The accelerated pace which outstrips the existing possibilities soon leads to the creation of imaginary resources where there are no real ones. That bears the name of paper money inflation. All the symptoms of it already there and they are at the same time the symptoms of a threatening economic crisis. Before it reaches its explosive form it is already pressing heavily upon the daily existence of the masses, causing a rise in prices or preventing their reduction.

The problem of the distribution of the revenues of the collectives between the immediate daily needs and the needs of accumulation, that is, of an extended production, constitutes the basic problem of socialist construction, a problem intimately bound up with that of the mutual relations between the working class and the peasantry as well as between the different layers within the peasant class itself. These problems cannot be solved a priori, that is, bureaucratically. It is a matter of the daily life of the masses, and these masses themselves must have the possibility to bring "correctives" to the economic programs a priori. That is the place where the economic questions are indissolubly welded to those of the Party regime, the trade unions and the Soviets.

As has already been said, the fundamental causes for the existing contradictions are inherent in the state of isolation of the Soviet Union.

But instead of attentuating them, the policy of the present leadership only accentuates them. There is a basic defeat in the whole economic plan. This plan should have had its aim to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat and its union with the peasant class with the aid of adequate and internally harmonized economic tempos, based on the estimate of the vital necessities of the masses in the present period which is a period of preparation and transition, and that up to the next stage on the road of the world revolution. Instead of this, the plan set itself an unrealizable, utopian and economically reactionary aim, namely: to profit by our backward situation and our poverty in order to construct "in the briefest time" an isolated, independent socialist society. Previously, it had considered that this task was realizable only at a "snail's pace" (Bucharin). Now, the leadership, fleeing the inconveniences of the prolonged delays rushes headlong at a"mad gallop" (the same Bucharin, restored).

In the name of adventurist tempos. whose cadences vary in the very course of execution. which they have not even troubeld to harmonize or to check up, and which often undermine each other, the workers' strength suffers the most violent pressure at the very moment when the existence level of the working classes is manifestly being depressed. The abrupt leaps of the industrialization lower the quality of the products which in turn rebound at the expense of the consumer and endangers tomorrow's producton.

That is how on the plan for industry, as well as on that of rural economy or that of finances, the present leadership is leading the country to painful crises and political catastrophes.

At the very moment these lines are written, the first signs reach us of the retreat that has just been begun. First an article by Stalin, then a new circular of the Central Committee. Caught in the claws of additional contradictions for which he bears the direct responsibility, Stalin, generous with words, warns against the "dizziness from success," his wisdom reducing itself to remarking that one should not collectivize what is only fit for "back-yard poultry." That's just where the trouble is! As though the utopian-reactionary character of the "generalized collectivization" held only because of the fact of a premature collectivization of domestic fowls and not at all of having wanted to force the creation of large farms while lacking the technical bases which alone could have assured the predominance of these large farms over the small ones.

The Stalinist Retreat

The circular of the Central Committee already goes much further than Stalin's article. In retreat, just as in offensive, the Centrist leadership unfailingly drags along behind the tail of organic processes and their repercussion in the apparatus After the "collectivization" had embraced —only within a few months of time!—more than half of the peasant class, the leaders suddenly perceived that the "well-known (!) recommendation of Lenin is being violated" concerning the indispensible character of the free distribution that must preside over all socialization. The circular at the same time profits by the occasion presented to accuse the "executors" of having equally violated "the code of the artel of rural economy" published by the Central Executive Committee. Now this code appeared only quite recently, that is, after the collectivization had already embraced more than fifty percent of the peasants' holdings. And moreover, this code—something far more important—is full of contradictions and gaps because it deliberately ignores all differentiation among the collectivized peasants, presenting matters as if outside of the especially excluded Kulaks, the remainder of the peasant class constituted a homogeneous mass. The whole policy of colletivization amounts to the policy of the ostrich. The circular of March 15 charges the unforunate "executors" with all the mortal sins up to treating them (in the name of the Central Committee!) as "dangerous zealots," thus shifting "rudely and disloyally," as is the custom, the mistakes of the leadership on to the inferior agents who took seriously the slogan of the liquidation of the classes "in the briefest time". After the impotent and gross circular of March 15 the unlucky "executors," and following them, the entire Party, find themselves definitely driven into an impasse. And now? More than half of the immense peasant ocean is already socialized. What share in this result ,falls upon the "dangerous zealots?" Five percent or is it forty? In other words, does the character of the collectivization accomplished, seen as a whole, rest upon an economic or a purely bureaucratic foundation? The circular does not reply to this fundamental question. Yet the reply is not only obvious but merciless for the "general line" of the leadership.

But the retreat will not halt at these first manifestations, not in the field of economic policy any more than in relation to the internal life of the Party. This time blindness of the leadership has been demonstrated outwardly in too striking a manner. The Party will have to stand the gaff. The de-Kulakization, the collectivization in mass, the bureaucratic transformation of the artels into communes—all these processes, still encouraged yesterday without any restraint, are today checked in full swing. Of course, a diplomatic and administrative maneuver can sometimes assume a character of brutality; but abrupt turns reverberatng to the vital foundations of 25,000,000 peasant holdings and flinging them Left to Right for a whole year cannot pass with impunity for the Party. Shortsighted Centrism and bureaucratic adventurism will come out of this experience irremediably compromised.

A correct policy in the U. S. S, R. is conceivable only in harmony with an international policy of the proletarian vanguard The leadership of the Communist International has fallen to a much lower level than the leadership of the Russian Communist Party.

The Theory of the "Third Period"

Since 1923, the Communist International has not rid itself of its tragic ways which undermine the organization and weaken its influence upon the working class. Dragging at the tail of events and stumbling each time against their echoes, the leadership of the C. I. for these seven years has constantly had an opportunist policy during the phases of revolutionary high tide and a policy of putchism during the phases of ebb tide. The most recent years, after the Chinese revolution had been lost thanks to the leadership of Stalin-Bucharin, after the saboteurs of English trade unionism had succeeded with the aid of the blind bureaucracy of Moscow, in stamping down the uprising of the revolutionary masses, the leadership of the C. I. has proclaimed the event of the "third period" as a period of direct revolutionary struggles. Since then, that is for two years, the aspect of world revolution has been systematically falsified by deforming it in the spirit required by "the third period". Revolutionary policy reposing upon the real state of the class struggle gves way to a policy of fireworks.

Now it happens that the years of follies of the C. I. were the years of the reinforcement of the social democracy. A new generation of workers had come forward; a generation that did not live through the treason of the social democracy during the war, but which has, on the other hand, known the indecision of the Communist Parties during these six or seven years. Hoping to attract this whole mass and to kill two birds with one stone, the Sixth Congress adopted the theory of "social fascism". As if one could conquer the power of the enemy by means of magic formulae.

In resolving to confuse the democratic bodyguard, the C. I. has rendered the social democracy a signal service. In the countries where fascism presents a real force, such as Italy, then Austria and Germany, the social democracy has not found it very difficult to show the masses not only the difference but the antagonism that there is between it and fascism. By the same token, it absolves itself from showing that it is not the democratic servant of capitalism. The whole political struggle is thus transposed to an artificial plane, and that to the greatest profit to the social democracy.

Having thus erected a wall between it and the social democratic masses, the Communist bureaucracy has in actuality ceased all struggle against the social democracy, reducing its task to tumultous mobilizations of that small working class minority over which Communist influence extends. That is what the "Red Days" serve for.

The work within the trade unions is invested with the same character. Referring to the indubitable necessity of utilizing the economic conflicts for revolutionizing the masses and preparing the general strike and uprising, the Communist bureaucracy, under the lash of the theory of the "Third Period", applies an adventurist tactic which can lead only to defeats. The study of the concrete conditions of the struggle by strikes gives way to quotations taken from the latest directives...from Manuilsky or Molotov. The political utilization (the "politization"?) of strikes is most frequently reduced to substituting sham slogans behind the back of the disorientated masses. For the Party bureaucry, above all other prob-

In Italy

How Does Italian Fascism Stand Today?

Many facts, of an international character as well as of one specific to the internal situation in the country, put the Italian crisis, the crisis of the fascist regime in Italy on the order of the day. Among the facts of an internal order, there is a whole series of movements characterizing the awakening of the masses and a new disposition on their part to fight. In the field of international facts, must be considered in the first place the Spanish events in connection with the fall of Primo de Rivera. The difference existing between the two dictatorships has already been remarked upon: between the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, born of a "pronunciamento" of military juntas in a country that is among the least economically developed and where the weight of old feudal elements is still very tangible; and the dictatorsihp of the Black Shirts, born of a long period of civil war between bourgeoisie and proletariat, and leaning upon a movement of petty bourgeois masses.

The Class Character of Fascism

Yet up to now there has never ceased to be a discussion on the character of the fascist dictatorship in Italy. For the parties of the bourgeois anti-fascist Concentration, which has its seat in Paris, fascism is, in general, a phenomenon above the classes, to be studied in the cabinets of psycho-analysts (Labriola); a morbid phenomenon having its origins in the psychosis of war (Nitti); a deviation, a degeneration from the normal paths of capitalism (Treves and Co., the emigrated social democratic chiefs being still desirous of seasoning their analysis with a bit of sweetened Marxism). Others again have wanted to apply the term of **Caesarism** to fascism (it is even said that Bucharin, fascinated by such an analogy, once had the idea of writing a book on fascism from this point of view). But the only correct method for the understanding and analysis of fascism is always the method that Marx taught us: the method of having the **class struggle** at its basis and applying itself to the conditions in which the class struggle develops in modern times.

Viewed from this historical angle, fascism is only **the dictatorship of Italian capitalism in its present phase.** Like every definition of fascism, this one naturally also gives only the essential content: the class content. The fascist movement is not a simple, a homogeneous one. Its line of developement from its origin till today, **has been in the direction of the defense of capitalist profit and the rabid struggle against the revolutionary movement of the working class;** but the stages traversed by fascism in its development are different, and each of its stages corresponds to a different moment in the development of the class struggle and the social relations of hostile forces: bourgeoisie and proletariat. These stages can be fixed about as follows:

1. Up to the occupation of the factories (September 1920), the epoch when the revolutionary wave reached its culminating point. At its beginning, fascism is a melange of combattive spirit, or "arditism". It still is, so to speak, an organization of cadres, limited to the cities and composed in its majority former "arditi", former war volunteers, mutilated soldiers and demobilized officers. It first activities against the working class are "razzias", surprise actions organized with the aid and complicity of the liberal State. (The governmental measure assuring the cadres of the fascio is a decree that bears the signature of a social reformist minister: Bonomi; it is the decree which provides for the support of demobilized officers in service activity at state expense.) In this period, the workers' movement is still too strong to be openly tackled even by the State forces. (Giolitti, instead of entering into conflict with the workers intrenched in the factories, prefers to let the social reformists operate so as to have a reason for occupying the factories). The force used by the bourgeoisie in this acute period of the class struggle to maneuver against the working class is principally the social democracy which, by the aid it brings the bourgeoisie in its struggle against the working class blazes the trail for fascism.

2. The second stage of fascism, the stage of "squadrisme" and "camionnisme" (assaults by armed squads mounted on military carriages), the stage that prepares the March on Rome, opens with the beginning of the defeat of the working class (defeat of the factory occupations).

Of all fascism's stages, this one is the bloodiest. On the countryside a veritable civil war develops. The liberal state, the old liberal state, throws off its stifling legality; it organizes, supports and protects the illegal violence of the fascist bands.

In this second stage ,fascism is no longer only an organization of armed bands: the defeat of the workers' and revolutionary movement in Italy—due to the internal defects of the proletarian movement and principally to the lack of an organized party of the revolution—has as its result the driving into the arms of fascism of important layers of peasantry (farmers, small proprietors) whose sympathy had been progressively alienated from the socialist party as much because of the wrong policy of "land socialization" as because of its tactic which set against it the various categories of agricultural laborers, instead of endeavoring above all to realize a political alliance between the latter and the small peasants. Coming to increase still more the ranks of the fascio, are the demobilized and jobless petty bourgeoisie, the tradesmen hampered in their business by the socialist cooperatives, and also, to a weak extent, workers frustated in their attempt at revolution.

The Period of Civil War

Crisis of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie; the defeat of the revolutionary labor movement (September 1920): these are the conditions fascism profited by to develop.

It is precisely in this second stage that there took place what is called. the "ruralization" of fascism. Steel and fire assure the submission of the country to agrarian slavery. The cities—where the industrialists in their turn now pass over to lockouts, "purge" the factories of revolutionary workers, applying "their" fascism to them in the shops—remain isolated from the peasants. In 1921 and 1922—up till the march on Rome—the civil war is in full swing in the cities and villages of Italy.

And it is in the furnace of the civil war that the Communist Party is born and organized. Since the working class is forced to beat a retreat, the Communist Party of Italy has as its first task to organize the workers' line of resistance, in order to lead it later to the victory that escaped it in 1920. Bitter and difficult battle, ending in a new defeat of the working class that still remained too attached to maximalist Centrism and to social reformism whose policy at this epoch consists of preaching passivity and hoping for the liquidation of the fascist bands by the very ones that armed them: by the decomposing liberal state, by the monarchy, the industrialists, the large land owners.

If in the first stage of fascism what best characterizes the treason of the social reformists is their pact signed with Giolitti for the evacuation of the factories; in the second fascist stage, the treason of the socialist chieftains is called "the pacification pact" concluded with Mussolini.

A propos of this coup d'Etat, I will recall in passing the discussions that were held at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, meeting in Moscow at the period of the march on Rome. Bordiga then denied the possibility of speaking of a coup d'Etat, expecting that it was always the same class remaining in power. "The bourgeosie cannot make a coup d'Etat against itself," he said. And he was right. But the coup d'Etat of October, 1922 was not against the bourgeoisie. On the contrary, it was a coup d'Etat for the bourgeoisie, for the big banks, of big industry and big landowning, for the strengthening of the dictatorship of imperialist capital against the interests of the broad masses of the people. The march on Rome consequently marks the violent break with the old liberal and democratic forms, henceforth incompatible with the defense of capitalist profit; it means the establishment of the **open** dictatorship of capitalism, the creation of the industrial-agrarian-fascist governmental bloc under the direction of monopolistic capital.

The Bourgeoisie Behind Fascism

It is a fact that the social composition of the fascist movement has undergone important changes in the different epochs of its development. But it is an error to believe, as is done by **Lo Stato Operiao,** review of the Italian Communist Party, that fascism, at a given moment of its development—notably at the period preceding the march on Rome when the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie had a very clear predominance within the fascio—had for a certain period been an autonomous political movement of the petty bourgeois masses and that, as such, it could have conceived and realized a plan of its own for state conquest against the old directing groups. In reality such an error leads to attributing to the middle classes an initiative it hasn't got and which it can have even less of in the present period of the class struggle (domination of monopolistic capital, period of the proletarian revolution). This conception also violates the Marxist conception of the modern state, the organization of capitalist domination. They forget, in pursuing this error, **the class** which organizes and rules the apparatus of domination (the state); and they finish by seeing only **the ruling political personnel** of the organization of the state, a personnel which, on the contrary, can very well be recruited and hired by various processes and in various circles (fascism or social democracy, for instance), according to the degree of the class struggle and the relation of opposing forces. Besides, there must still be noted the confusion that exists between **the class content** (dictatorship of capitalism) and the forms that the organization of the dictatorship can assume n the different historical periods of the class struggle (liberal, parliamentary forms or fascist form).

To sum up: It is strictly correct to say that fascism has not been, at any moment of its development, an autonomous political movement, even if the petty bourgeoisie who formerly adhered to it and still do, were able to think and still think so today. (Many are the fascists convinced that Mussolini is conducting an independent policy at Rome). But the illusions of the petty bourgeoisie are **not** the reality. The reality is given in the relation of forces which hide behind these illusions. Since the birth of fascsf, it is a fact that it has been raised and constantly guided by the ruling classes of the Italian state, by the bourgeoisie, by capitalism. The proof of it is that those who subsidized the first fascio (bankers, landowners, industrialists), are the same ones who later subsidized the march on Rome (Confederation of Industry, Commercial Bank, Agrarian Consortium, etc.).

In October 1922, the Italian bourgeoisie had thus realized all the political conditions for the march on Rome: defeat and dispersal of the labor movement; rupture of the contact between workers and peasants (isolation of the cities, of the country); anticipation and even resignation to the coup d'Etat by the democratic sections, Amedola, head of the liberal democracy, fascist victim who died abroad, had an attitude of support and encouragement for "the experiment of Mussolini" before the march on Rome). That is how Mussolinisolini could reach Rome and take power without a blow being exchanged.

3. It is from this moment that the third and new stage of fascism must be considered. It is the stage of the realizations of imperialist capital; the stage of the ferocious policy of squeezing and despoiling the working masses for the accumulation of capitalist profits. It is the stage of industrial and banking concentration; of the development of big capital, of big industry and of the agrarian bourgeoisie.

These few remarks on the subject of fascism are, in our opinion, necessary so as to allow a reply to the question we posed at the outset. By all that has preceded this, one sees that to reply to the question "How does the fascist dictatorship stand in Italy today?" signifies to analyze the elements of the situation permitting to define; first—how does the crisis of Italian capitalism and its fascist regime stand? and secondly—how do we stand with the formation of the revolutionary bloc of the workers and peasants?

That is what we will endeavor to determine in other articles.

—AKROS

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lems there is primarily the problem of staying in power. The grosser its errors, the hastier it is to transpose its methods of internal Party struggle to the field of the trade union movement, consolidating for a certain time its positions in the apparatus as compensation for those it has lost in the masses.

The official press, and principally the Moscow **Pravda,** leads its readers into error concerning the real situation within the C. I. Nevertheless the facts are there. At the present moment, when the commercial and industrial crisis create anew a great instability of capitalist relations, socially and internationally, we see that the Communist Parties are weakened, internally disorganized, without confidence in the leadership and without the faith of the masses in the slogans of the C. I.

The gravest thing is that under the cover of "self-criticism", there has been instituted in the C. I. as much as in the C. P. S. U., a disastrous regime of servile adulation before all the zig-zags of the "general line" concocted by a group of irresponsible functionaries.

The Right wing of Communism, which directs the openly opportunist elements (Brandler, Louis Sellier, Lovestone, Jilek, Roy, etc.) who, only yesterady, were joined with Stalin in his blind fury against the Left ,succeed in enrolling many revolutionary workers misled by the nefarious adventurism of the official policy. But the number of worker-Communists who fall finally into the most complete indifference is still greater.

(To Be Continued)

A Stalinist Canard

The Daily Worker of May 13, 1930 publishes a story entitled "Trotskyite Tries It Out on 3 Dogs, But First on Labor", in which it declares that comrade Jame P. Cannon is a staff writer on the New York Telegram. The story was reprinted in the Freiheit. The "proof" for this contemptible canard is a story in the Telegram signed by one "James Cannon, New York Telegram Staff Writer". Needless to say, there is absolutely no relation between comrade Cannon and the Telegram reportre, **a fact quite well known to the author of the lie, Earl Browder.** The James Cannon of the Telegram is a fairly well known New York reporter whose stories have appeared for years, first in the "tabloid" New York Daily News and lately in the Telegram. The writers on the Worker and the Freiheit seem to think that anyone working for the capitalist press is a scoundrel. So far as they are concerned, they can affirm this from personal experience. Most of the Freiheit staff, for example, from Olgin up, received its training as Abe Cahan's office boys on the yellow socialist Forward. They are the proper people to practise filthy Brass Check journalism in the Stalinist press today.

We should suggest that the Daily Worker now print a story identifying comrade Cannon with Bishop James Cannon, Jr., of the Methodist church, and thereby prove that the Trotskyists are all Methodists, and agents of Herbert Hoover. Anyone who thinks the Daily Worker incapable even of this, does not know the infantile mind of Earl Browder, or has not yet plumbed the depths of Stalinist depravity.

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The I. L. P.

Saviors of Reformism

The detailed reports that have arrived about the Birmingham conference of the Independent Labor Party enable us to judge its decisions with greater accuracy. As the first cabled reports already indicated, its most important act was the decision to organize as an independent faction the "loyal" I. L. P. representatives in the House of Commons Labor Party group, with a program and a discipline separate from that of the Parliamentary Labor Party as a whole.

The Discrediting of Reformism

The reasons for this radical step will best characterize its significance. The second Labor Party government has been a fiasco not only from the point of view of the revolutionary working class, but from the point of view of reformism itself. So reactionary has been its course, so essentially similar to ordinary Tory regimes has it been, so nobly has it defended the empire on every occasion, that it has awakened the enimity of whole sections of the working class, or at least laid the basis for such an awakening.

"In ten months," said Allen Young, one of the delegates to the I. L.P conference, "Mr. Thomas has done more to enthrone in autocratic power the financiers and bankers than the previous Tory administration in its four-and-a-half years, and had made intensely more difficult the tasks of future Socialist Governments". In the field of foreign affairs, the great pacifist MacDonald conclusively demonstrated that imperialist interests could be defended as well and as violently by him as by Chamberlain or Baldwin. At the Hague, Snowden roared for Britain's blood-money like a Shylock unleashed. At the London conference, MacDonald's ardor for "our naval supremacy" was indistinguishable under the micriscope from that of Lord Grey's In India, Laborite machine guns fire precisely the same bullets as the Tory type. At home or abroad, for the miner of South Wales as for the Egyptan fellahin, the Laborite government has run up a record fully as black as any of its predecessors, so black indeed that even wet-nosed liberals of the New York **Nation** type have felt constrained to mew a mild protest.

The socialists in power are thus proceeding to accomplish one of their most important if not involuntary tasks: the destruction of working class faith in the efficacy of reformism. The I. L. P, conference decision is a reflection of this fact from two diametrically opposed directions.

First: it is a result of **upward pressure from below,** the demand from the ranks for a more militant and aggressive struggle against capitalism and its most willing lackey, the Labor Party. There are thousands of revolutionary workers in the I.L.P. who are moving towards Communism, confusedly and unconsciously, but nevertheless they are moving. The pressure they excercized on the Birmingham conference was a step in this direction. From the point of view of the ferment in the ranks, the Birmingham decision is unquestionably to be greeted as a reflection of a powerful molecular process.

Maxton as MacDonald's Saviour

Secondly: the decision is a result of **downward pressure from above,** the desire of the I. L. P. leaders to save the miserable face of reformism to set up a new wall against the forward march towards revolution of the workers who have been jolted out of their belief in reformism by the brutal realities of its treachery. Maxton, in his keynote speech, adequately showed that he was against the Communist movement because he is against the proletarian revolution, but against the Labor Party only because it brings discredit to, let us call it, intelligent reformism. Just as the Labor Party opposition to capitalist parties is developed rigidly within the frame-work of capitalism, so Maxton's opposition to MacDonald is with equal rigor confined to the limits of reformism. Maxton and Co. have set up a concentration camp two miles to the Left of the Labor Party, and two hundred miles to the Right of the proletarian revolution, in which to intern for as long a time as possible those workers who would otherwise have no obstacles on their road of march from disillusioning reformism to militant Communism. That does not make Maxton and his colleagues revolutionists, but rather the most skillful deceivers of the working class, the Swiss Guardsmen of reformism. In a word, from the point of view of the I. L. P. leaders (in contradistinction to the progressive ranks), Birmingham marked only a clever and temporary shift of front.

The Incapacity of the C. P.

Were there in England a Communist Party capable of understanding and action, instead of a sect that chases hopelessly after Third Period mirages, this capital situation could be utilized to the utmost for the revolutionary movement. But that is too much to expect of the Murphys and Rusts. British Communism nevertheless has an excellent opportunity to tear aside the contemptible tatter with which the new saviors of reformism have clothed themselves in an attempt to rig up in England a weak-tea imitation of their Austrian prototype, the professional capitulators to reaction. Maxton and his clique will never blaze the trail of revolution in England —it is not in their blood. But the British Communists can. They need only to unlearn Stalinism and learn Marx and Lenin.

Unemployment

A Capitalist Monstrosity

A study of the world-wide unemployment which faces the capitalists of all countries reveals some very interesting facts. Capitalism in its development has come face to face with a monster of its own creation, the monster of unemployment. The breakdown of the capitalist mode of production and distribution has come to be an awful and compelling truth. The worker is beginning to realize this, to realize that it is not a matter of the personal merits of public officials but that the cause is fundamental and that the true offender is nothing less than the system of class rule under which he is exploited.

But if the worker is beginning to have some faint conception of these things the capitalist class has a much clearer conception They realize that not only have they no solution to the two problems which chiefly effect the lives of the vast majority of workers today, unemployment and low wages, but also that there is being established through the existence of these two legitimate, inevitable offspring of capitalism a real economic basis on which a revolutionary working class driven to desperation by hunger and starvation can unite.

Capitalism has no salvation to the problems of unemployment and low wages because (first) unemployment is caused by the fact that when the workers is employed he receives about one sixth of the product of his labor which in turn produces a huge surplus, an era of capitalist overproduction, so that the worker is turned out to starve while the boss finds a market for his surplus goods. Second, on the question of low wages we find that capitalism, beinp competitive, is forced to sell its goods in an open competitive market and the manufacturer who sells the cheapest will be the one who get the orders. But in order to decrease the cost of production, he must either increase production through the speed-up or he must cut wages. That the worker is being victimized by both of these methods of exploitation is a fact too well known to deserve mentioning to any extent here.

During the recent unemployment parades the capitalist dictatorship, especially in America, has shown its fear by its brutality. Every move of the working class which might contain a germ of revolutionary spirit is met with the club and bayonet. Giant strides in the class conscious awakening of the proletariat will bring in their train a series of repressions of a hitherto unheard of character. The American capitalist class is the most aggressive, arrogant ruling class in the world today comparable in brutality only to the Fernch feudal lords of 1789, and will not make any retreat except it be a forced one.

However, as the machine age and the dawn of the super-machine age forces more and more workers into the ranks of the unemployed to face destitution and starvation, and as the class struggle becomes sharper, this inevitable acceleration of the masses toward a revolutionary concept will take place. It would be idle to make any predictions as to how long before a decided development of this phase takes place.

Super-Machine Age

War is of course inevitable. Modern capitalism however, has at its command the inventive genius of the world. Never before in the history of humanity has insensate mechanism been able to perform the tasks of both brawn and brain as it does today. One of our radio engineers a few years ago waxing enthusiastic over the success of some experiments in radio-control, predicted that not only was the driverless automobile and the manless battleship here, but that the workerless factory was just around the corner. Predictions of this type are usually dismissed by the average unimaginative worker as so much "bull" until the dream becomes a reality and he finds himself out of a job as the consequence. Quite recently one of the big electric companies was demonstrating the televox, or mechanical man, so that we see that the human supervisor of the machine is about to be replaced by the machine supervisor of the machine.

Reflecting on the tremendous davancee of this inventive genius and on the driving force of various capitalist nations to secure the world markets, it is easy to comprehend that a gradual introduction of this super-machine era will take place. Searching for a way to save itself from extinction by competition, capitalism will pave the way for its extinction by revolution. Trying to save itself by avoiding one road it will be hopelessly lost by taking another. Under no circumstances is it possible for a return to the periodical resurrection of capitalist proseperity in the sense of giving part time employment to nearly all the workers. We must organize not to stop the onrush of the machine age but rather to stop any further advance of the machine age slavery. You must fight for the abolition of the capitalist ownership of the machine and the emancipation of the working class through the dictatorship of the proletariat. —G. ROBERTS

The Fight for Harry Eisman

The ruling class has few scruples in its punishment of Communists. It picks from the ranks of fighters for the working class and hits with equal severity at all challenges to its rule. Now from the picket line, now from the Party, and it does not hesitate to send to its prisons even the "tender" youth. Harry Eisman, a member of the Young Pioneers has been sentenced to five years imprisonment in the Hawthorne Reformatory for participating in the March 6th unemployment demonstrations.

It Depends on Whose Holiday It Is

The ridiculous farce of the charge truancy against school children participating in working class holidays and demonstrations is quite apparent. Countless times throughout the year holidays are officially proclaimed by the authorities—flag day, decoration day, Lincoln's Birthday, etc. Here the students are turned loose into the streets and forced to sing and cheer the "Star Spangled" capitalist and land of the slave. The boy scouts camp fire girls, etc., are released from school almost any time the jingo militarists want to show their masters what gracious and valuable service they are rendering them.

But just let a working man's son or daughter walk out to demonstrate against unemployment and the storm breaks loose. Expulsion, terrorism, and even imprisonment awaits the working class children. The capitalist class knows well the phrase: "The youth is the hope of the future." All forces are brought into play to make this future one of servility and docile obedience to capitalism.

Harry Eisman sent to prison for five years; two students, Max Weiss of City College, and Sol Wellman of Boy's High School, are threatened with expulsion; eleven mothers are given jail sentences because their children took part in working class demonstrations. The authorities grow red in the face denouncing the Young Pioneers and the Young Communist League. From the ruling class come cries for the suppression and smashing of these militant youth organizations. Drivers are heralded all over the press to counteract through the Boy Scouts any influence the Young Pioneers have among working class children.

In face of this increased persecution the working class must not remain quiet. Only odganizations like the Y.P.S.L.,long impotent in the interests of the working class, can fail to respond. With increased unemployment running into the millions, the speed-up and the wage cuts forced on the working class, the cry for organization becomes louder and more imperative We must consolidate our forces to give impetus to this process.

Especially the working youth which is more exploited, has the great need to ally to the banner of Communism. Any unanswered blow on any section of the working class seriously weakens the whole movement. The case of Harry Eisman does not stand alone as an isolated sign of the cruelty of some city official. On the contrary, it is just one of a long chain of blows dealt both to adult and youth movements. Thus the slogan of Free Harry Eisman should become for the Communist youth a centre for mobilizing the working youth and student. The liberation of this young student is the task of working class youth irrespective of political beliefs and towards this end a broad united front should be created. The Communist League (Opposition) pledges its wholehearted support to save the movement for Harry Eisman from isolation. Let a strong movement be the response to ruling class provocations.

—GEO. CLARKE

No. 10

BULLETIN OF THE RUSSIAN OPPOSITION

Published in the Russian Language

Summary of this Issue

L. Trotsky: The Party Situation and the Tasks of the Left Opposition (Open Letter to the Members of the C.P.S.U.). —Yes or No? (The First Reply on the Assassination of Blumkin).—Markin: The Dissolution of the Party into the Class.—L. Trotsky: The Five Year Plan and World Unemployment.—"A Course but Not a Policy": on the New Course in the U.S.S.R.—Correspondence of the Opposition.—Letters from Russia.—Alfa: "Pure and Transparent as a Crystal".—R. Well: The Split in the Leninbund.—The International Unification of the Left Opposition.—Berg: The Labor Movement in Lithuania.—Etc., etc.

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We see from the papers that a little while ago the Lovestone group sent a letter to the Senate Committee protesting the Hoover nomination of Judge Parker to the Supreme Court, evidently with the desire of getting some one into that position who would be fair to labor...Not many days later, the Senate voted to reject Parker. The American bourgeoisie must simply have been scared out of its wits by Lovestone.

Ruining a Movement

Decline of the Chinese Communist Party

SHANGHAI—

The Chinese revolution of 1925-27 was drowned in blood by the joint forces of the imperialists and the national bourgeoisie with the help of Stalin. The Communist Party suffered a series of defeats in the struggle and became completely impotent both by physical extermination of the white terror and the demoralization caused by Stalin's theories. The Sixth (last) Congress of the Party held in June 1928 did not sum up the lessons of the greatest revolution in the East and straighten our political line in order to prepare the third Chinese revolution; instead it deepened the past mistakes and disarmed the Party ideologically and politically before the bourgeoisie.

The Congress defined the character of the next Chinese revolution as still a bourgeois democratic one and refused to see that the course and experiences of the 1925-27 revolution have shown that the solution of the tasks of a bourgeois democratic revolution can only lie in the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Congress gave ambiguous expressions concerning the present stage of developments, saying that although there is no broad mass revolutionary upheaval, it is nevertheless inevitable; we can already see weak symptoms of this upheaval but we must not overestimate them.

An Open Road to Adventurism

Thus the Congress did not give correct and definite estimations of the present period as the one between two revolutions, and did not put up transitional, revolutionary democratic slogans for the conquest of the masses. Instead it opened all doors to every adventurist explanation of the resolution. Every manifestation of discontent among the masses, no matter what character it assumes no matter how sporadic and spontaneous it is, a defensive strike or a mutiny of the soldiers, or the riots of the rickshaw coolies in the breaking up of tramways—all this is put into the scheme of the approach of the great mass revolutionary upheaval is seized upon to prepare the uprising or general strike. Those who do not believe this way are, of course, Trotskyists and therefore liquidators.

By defining the character of the next Chinese revolution (or the present unfinished one, according to the Stalinists) as bourgeois democratic, the Party raised in its "Program of the Chinese Revolution at the Present Stage" ten demands, as for example: Expropriation of the enterprises and banks of foreign capital; establishment of the workers-peasants-soldiers Soviet government; confiscation of the lands of all landlords and transference of all of it to the peasants. This means that the enterprises and banks of Chinese capital shall not be touched and violated in the revolution. It also gave elastic formulae concerning the peasants' movement, such as, "It is not correct deliberately to force (or to intensify) the anti-rich peasants struggle...but this is not to mean that we should give up the class struggle against the rich peasants...."

Such formulations naturally become repulsive and excite indignation among the rank and file of the Party members under the conditions of sharp class struggle antagonisms in China after the revolution. Already in the enlightment campaign on the Sixth Congress, the workers in unit meetings demanded why the enterprises of Chinese capital should not be confiscated by the revolutionary power. The workers were not silenced by the scholasticism of the Party functionaries and said in indignant protest: "You are the second Chiang Kai-Sheks, only without arms," and then quit the meetings.

The tactics towards the rich peasants, when put into practise, can only mean the union with them but not the struggle against them. The rich peasant in China is most hated by the poor peasants, and by the village laborers, because he is a userer, robs the poor peasant by making loans at heavy rates of interest. Now the Party calls upon the poor peasants not to force the struggle against the rich ones when they should be the direct object of attack.

What did the poor peasant answer? In the province of Hupeh, for example, they said in one meeting: "We shall make no more revolutions. What good does it do us?" They slept in the meeting instead of taking an interest in it, that is, they passively resisted the official policy. In some other provinces, the rich peasants made their way into the Party, filled its ranks and even occupied leading posts there. When the Central Committee issues its directives to such Party locals, with slogan against taxes of every kind, against rent and payment of loans, then these locals only carried out the directives against taxes but not against rent and loans.

Zig-Zagging Policies

Because of the Stalinist leadership in the Comintern, the Party is left without any policy and definite line. It is helpless before events. Right on the eve of the war between Chiang Kai-Shek and the Kwang-Si clique in the Spring of last year, the Central Committee of the Party categorically stated that no war is possible beween these two militarists' groups, and this in face of the feverish military preparations and transport of arms which convinced even the local Party organs of the inevitability of war. Only yesterday it spoke of not forcing the struggle against the rich peasants and denounced the Trotskyists for such a standpoint. Today, it opens a campaign in the Party press against those members of the Party who show hesitation in the struggle and announces itself ready for fighting the rich peasants to the bitter end. Yesterday it said that Chiang Kai-Shek represents the bourgeoisie against the "feudal power" of the Kwang-Si clique. Today, it says that "the Kiang-Su (the province where the Chiang government is located) ruling class is dominated by feudal elements". All these theories are changed like the weather or one's linen. What serious revolutionist can have confidence in such a leadership?

In the sphere of action, the Party leadership shows no less lightmindedness. Since the first of May, the Party has again entered the era of adventurism. Demonstrations were held in the streets according to the calendar of revolutionary festivals, if not with the masses then with the Party membeds alone. Instead of "takinp possession of the streets", some hundred people together with the bystanders, stand on the sidewalks of an appointed street at an appointed time, then someone gives the signal with firecrackers, some slogans are shouted, leaflets are thrown into the street, and then there are some arrests, most of the participants and observers going quietly home.

Of course such farcical demonstrations can only lower the standard of Communism, make the Communist workers leave the Party's ranks, and arouse the antipathy of the workers. The attendants at the demonstrations become less as the former become more frequent and desperate. When the attendants diminish, then workers are hired to show up in the streets! No serious agitational work is developed in the factories or works, in the important big factories only two or three Communist workers remain and even then no regular meetings take place—sometimes for two months. The local organizers get in touch with them only when it is necessary to enlist them in demonstrations.

Decline in Membership

The membership under such conditions is miserable. According to an official admission in a circular of the Shanghai Eastern district (the biggest industrial district in Shanghai), the membership decreased since last August from 85 to 82. The membership in all Shanghai, according to the most optimistic figure, is about 800. There are many other industrial cities where the Communist workers do not count more than ten. We owe all this to Stalin's blind policy of adventurism, to the destructive work of the Stalinists which alienate the Party from the workers. Indeed, things have even gone so far that in some Shanghai factories, the Communist workers try to organize their own unions behind the backs of the official leadership and oppose their meddling in their affairs.

The characteristic feature of this period of adventurism is that it is combined with opportunism of the worst kind. The C. C. last year sent Communists into the army of the Left Kuo Min Tang generals to cooperate with them in the military campaign against Chiang Kai-Shek. The Party has sent representatives to attend the anti-Chiang Kai-Shek conference in Hong Kong in which the reactionary militarists and the Left Kuo Min Tang participated. Many lower Party workers were taken in by the Left Kuo Min Tang's military adventure against Chiang Kai-Shek. Others followed the tail of the Left Kuo Min Tang in the economic struggle and trade union tactics. At the top of the Party, a wild campaign is developed against the Left K.M.T. full of invective and abusive words, but behind the scenes, the official leadership coquettes with these same Lefts, organizes the armed uprising together with them. The Central task and slogan of today's official leadership is the general political strike, partisan's warfare, armed uprising, organizing the local uprisings, preparing to establish the revolutionary power, etc., that is, to run further away from the workers in order to combine with the Left Kuo Min Tang and become in fact the instrument of the petty bourgeoisie.

The Guerilla Warfare

As to the guerilla warfare, in many places it becomes "aimless burning, killing and pillaging under the leadership of the declassed elements" (from the Party circular), since it lacks a mass basis. It sometimes violates the poor peasant's property becaus the armed forces of the landlords and rich peasants are too strong to permit of plundering. In other villages, the guerilla warfare which has some mass basis, divides the land among the peasants and annuls loans, doing something in the interest of the peasants by exterminating the landlords and bureaucrats. But these acts are too far from the important cities to exercize any influence upon them, and besides when it assumes a more menacing character, it is overpowered and driven away by the government's troops.

Since last year, the Party has concentrated all its propaganda work in the struggle against "Trotskyism", because the Communist Opposition has begun to work in China. Since then, it has taken a series of organizational measures against us. It fights most fiercely against one slogan, the Constituent Assembly, denouncing it as the slogan of the Left Kuo Min Tang. Thus, the constituent assembly, together with the 8-hour day, the confiscation of land, and the fight for the complete independence of China and self-determination of nationalities within China, which form our transitional revolutionary democratic demands to mobilize the masses, are "liquidators' demands" in the eyes of the Stalinists. But that does not in the least prevent the official leadership of the Party from organizing the "League for the Struggle for Freedom", together with the discontented petty bourgeois elements, intellectuals and professors, which is necessarily a decorative and helpless institution like the Anti-Imperialist League all over the world: a veritable tail of the petty bourgeoisie.

NIEL-SIH

April 13, 1930.

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The Militant office is anxious to get hold of a copy in English of "The Conditions of the Working Classes in 1848" by Frederick Engels. The book must be in fair shape and the price asked for it should be equally fair. If you have a copy you would like to sell, please communicate, giving details about price, conditions etc., to The Militant, 25 Third Avenue, New York, N. Y. We will appreciate all offers.

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THROWS HUNDREDS OUT OF JOBS

MILLTOWN, N. J.—With the closing of the Michelin Tire Co. works at Milltown, near New Brunswick, hundreds of French workers imported from Brittany are jobless here in a strange country. They staged a short walkout two years ago, in revolt against a wage which sounded good in Brittany when they left their fisher nets to look for gold in America. Arrived in Miltown, they found the $12 a week wage paid adult men didn't mean what the equivalent in francs would buy back in the old country.

Φ

CLEVELAND—Over 109 men have been dropped from the Cleveland Railway Co. payroll since January 1. The company saved $74,663in maintenance in April, and $14,0000 was cut off operating expenses.

THE YOUNG VANGUARD

The Breakdown of the Mexican League

The period from April 1929 until August of the same year when the III Congress of the Young Communist Federation of Mexico was celebrated, was one of rapid progress for the Mexican Communist Youth movement. From a small number of nonfunctioning units, composed mostly of peasants with a disorganized central apparatus, an organization of 660 effective members in over 30 units and a central executive in which half a dozen departments functioned regularly was built up. During this same period, it is well to observe, the Communist Party of Mexico was disintegrating and losing one important position after the other, in the trade union and anti-imperialist movements, and also in the "Workers and Peasants Bloc" that had been formed opportunistically through concessions to the petty bourgeois directors of the National Peasants League (Galvan and Co.).

The national plenum of the C. C. of the Party was obliged to recognize in July 1929 that the youth federation had a better status than the Party and it was generally accepted that the Y. C. F. had more effective members in its organization than the Party itself.

The Apparatus Men Get Busy

At this stage, preparations for the III National Congress of the Y. C. F. of Mexico were made and a representative of the Young Communist International, comrade Matlin appeared on the scene. Already there had been several minor struggles on technical questions between the C.E.C. of the Y.C.F. and the C.E.C. of the C.P. in all of which the personal political interests of E. Sormenti, representative of the Party C.E.C. in the corresponding organ of the Y.C.F., were to be seen. Sormenti utilized the C. E. C. of the Y.C.F. as a "big stick" to win his ends in the C.E.C. of the Party.

A very weak political thesis, destructive in its analysis of the past work of the Y.C.F. and with proposals for the immediate commencement of numerous new "political" tasks was presented by the representative of the Y. C. I. who, it goes without saying, had a very deficient knowledge of the situation, the strength and possibilities of the youth federation. In this thesis it was proposed to commence at once the formation of youth sections in the unions, agrarian organizations and in the Red Aid, the organization of nuclei in the army, the organization of a National Sports Federation, of a League of Youth against imperialism, and to call at an early date a national convention of the Red Pioneers. It was declared imperative that the Y. C. F. commence immediately all of these tasks.

When the opposition group continued in its demands that definite stress be laid on the more important work of organization, and the trade unions, and that the anti-militarist, anti-imperialist, young peasants league and youth section of the Red Aid be considered not of immediate importance with practical rejection of the last three the "guardian of the Holy Grail" from Moscow threatened us with expulsion should we insist on carryng the points of difference to the floor of the congress. After some minor changes regarding the criticism of past work, the draft thesis was accepted. In order to prevent a split in the Federation, the opposition group agreed not to bring the question up at the congress.

The congress took place without any opposition to the line of action laid down by he presidium which was controlled by Matlin and Sormenti. Veiled accusations were made against the "liquidationist", "social democratic" and "anti-Communist' tendencies, of the oppositionist comrades and by employment of true Stalinist methods, such as declaring that "foreigners" could not form part of a Central Committee, (!) the new C. C. and C. E. C. were named. Perhaps realizing that the new C. E. C. would have to work under the dictatorship of some Party or international representative and for fear of developing leadership, it was decided that no General Secretary should be named, and that all political functions should be carried out collectively by the C. E. C.

Immediately the deficiencies of the new C. E. C. were to be observed. The different theses approved at the congress were not sent to the units or even to the regional committees. All of the work of the C. E. C. fell into disorganization as no one knew where or how to begin. All the scolding of Matlin and the nearness of the "imminent" workers and peasants revolution could not get the new apparatus to function. The only work that did not become completely demoralized was the press and Pioneer work. Delegates were no longer sent to the interior to carry on direct work with the units and with the masses.

Knowing that an anti-militarist campaign would be certain to bring down a still more severe repression of the movement by the authorities, and without counting on any real mass support, this work was given not only preference by the Y. C. F. but was actually turned into the principal task of the organization. The spirit of adventure always found in the youth was appealed to, and the comrades in different parts of the country vied with one another in seeing which local could get the generals exasperated first.

No sooner had the campaign been commenced than the repression struck with full force. In a period of about two months all the leading elements of the ight largest urban locals were imprisoned, including the whole C. E. C. with the exception of one comrade, besides many Party and trade union leaders. About 20 foreigners were deported from the country, five comrades (of whom four were members of the Y. C. F. and one of the C. E.C.) were exiled to the penal colony in the Pacific Ocean and the Y. C. F. of Mexico was reduced to complete impotence. The "mass" demonstrations were few, rickety and ineffective. In the midst of all this, after organizing the expulsion of the writer of these lines from the Party and the Y.C.F. for his criticism of the line in Mexico and disagreement with the general splitting policy of the Comintern abroad and greasing the slides for others, Matlin fled cowardly from Mexico, without so much as notifying the Central Executive Committee.

Expulsions Continue

At the present time the expulsion fever continues to rage full blast in the C.E.C. of the Y.C.F. which seems to be about to result in its expelling itself. It may be interesting to note that the present C.E.C. of the Y.C.F. of Mexico is composed of one alternate, named in the congress, and two comrades, both of them quite incapable of national direction and who were not elected at the congress.

There is still hope however. This lies in the reorganization of the Young Communist forces in Mexico under the banner of the International Left Opposition. When the present "Left" turn of the Comintern takes its inevitably sharp Right turn, and the sane young Communist elements in Mexico (and there are many) realize the correctness of our position, we may hope for a rapid improvement of the situation. Those who have striven for the building up of the Y. C. F. of Mexico will not stand quietly by while the organization is smashed under the combined blows of the governmental reaction and the Centrist bureaucracy.

—RUSSELL BLACKWELL

The Rank and File Is Ominously Silent!

On Tuesday, May 14, at 8 p .m., at a general membership meeting of the New York district of the Young Communist League took place. I read in one of the last issues of the Militant an article about the last N. Y. "united front" May Day conference. In that article it was stated that there was hardly any discussion from the floor, etc. Now at a Y. C. L. membership meeting which is called to act on a Plan of Action given out by the N. E. C. one would think that there would be adequate discussion.

But the fact is that there was NO DISCUSSION from the rank and file members. Of course even you might not believe it, so I will explain what took place. First, Shohan, the District Organizer, reported for about an hour. When he was through, we were supposed to have 3 minutes discussion for each speaker. Well, the first was a comrade who spoke on the Young Worker in the name of the District Committee. Then a comrade on the Needle trades, who made an announcement that all the comrades should leave the meeting and go to the general needle trades fraction meetin in Manhattan Lyceum where Bedacht was reporting. Then the district anti-director took is three minutes to give some instructions about giving out leafiets to the fleet. He also reported that Saturday's mobilization "was a flop". Then two more, the great unknown, John Steuben and Sam Reed each gave us a speech a piece.

After this Shohan too' the floor without asking the members whether any discussion is needed and "summed up".

We were separated into fractions, that is, needle trades, food workers, etc., and were supposed to join the T. U. U. L. as a start in the membership drive.

League Members, Wake Up!

I think it's about time the League members woke up. It has gone far enough this bureaucratic way of conducting work. Shohan in his report, speaking about the unemployment work of the Y .C. L., said: "As far as the League is concerned, it is a one hundred percent failure."

Just think, after Shohan, criticizing the rank and file, making insinuations that unit organizers have misappropriated funds (collection boxes were given to each unit on May 1-3, and only five units had returned their boxes thus far, Shohan asked whether they used the money for movies or to pay their rent), in his whole speech he NEVER EVEN ONCE CRITICIZED THE LEADERSHIP. He didn't even bother to take a vote to approve the Plan of Action.

Now I will ask some of the older members in the N. Y. League what has happened? Have they become robots and stopped thinking? Where are Fanny Rothman, Freema Katz, Ben Harper, H. Nussbaum, Eda Eisman, Morris, Bindler, Kucher, Mae Kuperman, Friedman, Shavelson, Slipian (Harlem), etc.?

I will end by quoting from a speech delivered to the Third Congress of the Russian Y. C. L.: "A Communist who would dream of boasting of his Communism on the basis of the ready-made conclusions taught to him, without performing the most serious, the difficult and persistent work, without understanding the facts of which he should be extremely critical, would be a miserable Communist indeed." Let this be the guide for every Y. C. L. member.

—LEO RING

Φ

All members of the Young Comunist League are invited to write articles to the Young Vanguard on the condition the Y. C. L. finds itself today.. The surest way to stop the wrecking tactics of the Y.C.L. bureaucrats is to expose them before the membership.

Φ

We are sure nobody will accuse us of not taking life seriously when we say that upon reading the Daily Worker (5-17-1930) we laughed till we collapsed. That irrepressible humorist, Harrison George, writes there: "The Communist Party has nothing to hide from the workers. It publishes its opinions, it programs, its resolutions, so every worker can find out just what the Communists stand for...It is going to hold a national convention next month and being a **really** (emphasis in original—Ed.) democratic organization it consults its members on the Thesis drawn up by the Central Committee on the Economic and Political Situation." This fellow **will** be the death of us yet

In the Y. C. L.

The Plan of Action

The feeling which one experiences in the Young Communist League these days is that of a man trying to lift himself by his bootstraps. There seems to be a tremendous strain, a terrible commotion, much shouting mingled with many threats, but amidst all the fury there stands the League still tugging violently at its bootstraps. Each successive resolution appears more dismal than the preceding one. In every sphere of activity nothing but failures and defeats stare the League in the face. The membership turnover has assumed the character of a rationalized factory.

"Do More Work"

Through all the discordant noise and din, shrill and relentless, rings one penetrating strain: We lag behind, we lag behind, we continue to lag behind, we never seem able to stop lagging behind, we must not lag behind but we do lag behind, lag lag, lag behind. This strain has many variations but all have the same theme. The puny League bureaucrats, devoted disciples of Browder and Foster, are not in the least, however nonplussed. They have a remedy for everything. "You must do more work!" they thunder to the membership. And then to show that they have even heard of such a strange matter as Leninist analysis in determining the cause for failures, they add: "We must fight both the Right and Left dangers". They hope to conceal their impotence behind a screen of "theoretical" verbiage.

To be sure, the Right danger is the main danger, they say. But "there is also the so-called 'Left' danger which stands as a main barrier to be overcome in successfully combatting the main danger, the Right danger." (Resolution and Plan of Action of National Executive Committee —Young Worker, May 12, 1930). Life, it seems, is indeed most complicated. And the road in the struggle against the Right danger is most devious. With so many different varieties of social fascists, time is certain to produce new dangers. Then the alarm will have to sound, and it will be observed that we lag behind. The resolutions will have to bristle with warnings like these: There is also the so-called "Middle" Danger which stands as a main obstacle to be overcome in successfully combatting the socalled "Left" danger which stands as a main barrier to be overcome in successfully combatting the main danger, the Right danger.

The League membership must call a halt to all this idiotic jabbering and criminal phrasemongering, all of which is intended only to conceal the bankruptcy of the Stalinist leadership.

The "Plan of Action"

The socalled Plan of Acton, this latest innovation with which the Steubens, the Harveys, and the Greens are attempting to cover their recent miserable failures, cannot be realized with the present false policies and opportunist regime. It will be as successful as the last membership drive whch it was claimed recruited 1,100 new members. The resolution on the Plan of Action says: "Every unit must be made to function so that they can hold the gains made in new members, and not lose young workers for the League as we did during the last membership drive." And Shohan, D. O. of the N. Y. district stated at a recent membership meeting: "This drive must not be like the last drive where we recruited 200 members on paper." The adoption of such high-sounding titles as "Plan of Action' and "shock troops" cannot make the present drive any different than the last.

The members of the Y. C. L. must be alert. They must not permit themselves to be deceived. They must try to find out what is wrong, and what is all this unceasing "lagging behind" all about. They must study the viewpoint of the Left Opposition Some are already doing this.

—GEORGE RAY